

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 03762 040839Z
ACTION H-02

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P 040804Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 890

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 3762

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, KS, US
SUBJ: FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE ACTIVITIES: SUBPONEA OF MISSIONARIES

1. A LOCAL AMERICAN SOURCE INFORMED THE EMBASSY ON MAY 4 THAT HE HAD HEARD THAT MISSIONARIES WHO HAD SERVED IN KOREA AND WHO WERE NOW IN THE UNITED STATES WERE BEING ISSUED SUBPONEAS BY THE FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE TO APPEAR FOR A HEARING ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN KOREA WHICH WOULD TAKE PLACE IN A MID-MAY TIME FRAME. THIS SOURCE APPEARED TO FEEL THAT THE MISSIONARIES SELECTED WOULD BE THOSE CRITICAL OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SCENE IN THE ROK.

2. OUR LOCAL MISSIONARY SOURCES HAVE NOT HEARD OF ANY SUBPOENAS BEING ISSUED TO AMERICAN MISSIONARIES IN KOREA OR TO THOSE WHO HAVE RETURNED TO THE US. THEY POINT OUT, HOWEVER, THAT THEY WOULD NOT NORMALLY EXPECT TO LEARN VERY EARLY ON OF ACTIVITIES IN THE US. THESE SAME MISSIONARY SOURCES DISCOUNT THE LIKELIHOOD OF PARTICIPATION IN HEARINGS TO REVIEW HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ROK BY MISSIONARIES RESIDENT IN ROK OR PLANNING TO RETURN TO ROK. THEY POINT OUT THAT CHURCH POLICY IS NOT TO HAVE MISSIONARIES INVOLVED IN SUCH ACTIVITIES, BOTH TO PROTECT THE INDIVIDUAL AND HIS ABILITY TO CONTINUE WORK IN KOREA AND TO PROTECT THE POSITION OF THE CHURCH IN KOREA. THEY ALSO FEEL THAT THOSE MISSIONARIES WHO ARE SUPER CRITICAL OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION HERE, AND WERE WILLING TO RUN THE OBVIOUS RISKS INVOLVED, WOULD NOT REQUIRE SUBPOENAS, BUT
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RATHER WOULD PROBABLY VOLUNTEER TO APPEAR.

3. THESE SAME MISSIONARY SOURCES, HOWEVER, BELIEVE THAT OUR ORIGINAL SOURCE MAY HAVE MISREAD THE INFORMATION HE RECEIVED. THEY POINT OUT THAT THE DOCUMENTS ISSUED BY THE FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE CONTAINED A SECTION ON ROK EFFORTS TO SUBVERT THE CHURCH. THEY SEE IT AS

MUCH MORE LIKELY, IF SUBPOENAS ARE INVOLVED, THAT THE MISSIONARIES BEING CALLED ARE THOSE WHO WERE FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT AND WHO MAY HAVE RECEIVED ASSISTANCE FROM THE ROKG OR ITS AGENTS AS A RESULT.

4. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION DEPARTMENT CAN PROVIDE ON FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE INTENTIONS, TIMING AND MISSIONARY INVOLVEMENT. SINCE WE ARE INVOLVED IN SEEING TO THE WELFARE OF ALL AMERICANS AND AMERICAN-SPONSORED INSTITUTIONS IN THE ROK, ANY ADVANCE WORD ON ACTIONS THAT MIGHT HAVE AN ADVERSE IMPACT ON THE POSITION OF AMERICANS HERE WILL BE MOST APPRECIATED.
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Message Attributes

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